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THE RADIO PROPAGANDA ATMOSPHERE OF THE GERMAN PUBLIC

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March 21, 1942

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SUMMARY

The broadcast propaganda to which the population of a nation is subjected constitutes a significant part of the total war picture for that population. In this report we have tried to indicate the nature of the propaganda to which the German people may listen, that from their own official stations is, of course, very encouraging: but the propagandists of the anti-Axis countries make definite efforts to raise doubts in the German listeners' minds. Insofar as they are successful, such doubts may be of real importance to the Allied cause.

The analysis of German home broadcasts may also allow one to make inferences concerning danger points in civilian attitudes. It is pointed out that the number of topics upon which the German propagandists dwell are known from other sources to be danger-spots in the civilian population.

THE RADIO PROPAGANDA ATMOSPHERE OF THE GERMAN PUBLIC

I. INTRODUCTION

Radio broadcasting has become a very important operation in modern war. Not only does a nation attempt to influence the populations of enemy nations, but it also makes efforts to control the attitudes and behavior of its own people. In the present report an attempt is made to indicate the nature of broadcast propaganda stimulation, both from the official German radio and from the major broadcasting activities of antagonists, to which the German people are exposed, and to appraise its effect on the German civilians. Furthermore, the content of the official German home broadcasts is quite possibly influenced by conditions and attitudes of the civil population; thus from an analysis of these broadcasts one may make inferences concerning civilian morale.

Legal restrictions on listening. The effectiveness of the radio as a propaganda tool depends, of course, upon the extent of listening. Under the generally recognized Nazi regulations, the mass of material theoretically available to the German radio listener is greatly restricted. In the first place, German law permits listening to only designated stations. There are about eighty of these, half in Germany and the balance in German-controlled countries. The latter regularly broadcast in languages other than German. In addition to enemy programs, the law excludes broadcasts from Italy, Japan, neutral European countries, and from Germany's own short-wave transmitters. Punishment for illicit listening may be as high as five to fifteen years' imprisonment

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or in extreme cases when aggravated by the spreading of information thus received, even the death sentence. In Berlin the Party organization has been utilized to help stop foreign radio listening, by a word-of-mouth campaign and by placing on all radios cards which read: "Remember: Listening to foreign transmitters is a crime against the national safety of our people. By order of the Fuehrer this crime is punishable by long prison sentences."

Jamming. Another method of reducing the amount of listening is by jamming, i.e., broadcasting on identical wave lengths so as to produce interference and thus make the prohibited broadcast unintelligible. Specifically noted as having been jammed are British transmissions in German, Russian stations, the Vatican, and the freedom station called "The Chief". Jamming is probably not 100 per cent effective inasmuch as the stations being jammed can and do shift their transmission wave length slightly and thus avoid the interference.

In general, German-controlled transmissions dominate the broadcast atmosphere of the population. However, all available first-hand reports speak in confident terms of widespread illegal listening, especially to British broadcasts. Further, the listeners to such broadcasts apparently spread what they hear by word of mouth. Reports of these illegal actions, while possibly optimistic, are supported by the attention paid in German broadcasts to countering British propaganda, (the regular talks of Herr Fritsche are almost entirely devoted to this purpose), and by the use of the Party organization to help control foreign broadcast listening.

II. COMPARATIVE SUMMARY OF BROADCAST CONTENT 1/

The major aspects of broadcast content for the German official radio, for British and Russian broadcasts, and for the transmissions of the Vatican and the two principal "freedom stations" are shown in tabular summary in Table I. In addition to a brief characterization of the stations and the general aim of their broadcasts to the German people, the table indicates the content of broadcasts categorized under nine rubrics: attitude toward the war, toward the Nazi government, toward German domestic conditions, toward German traditions, toward the "New Europe", toward the major Axis countries and the United Nations, and the ideologies expressed. The entries under each of these illustrate the emphasis of the several stations. In general, the official German radio is favorable and encouraging to Germans. Other broadcasts seek to show the German people that their own difficulties and those of the world are the responsibility of the German leaders, and that alleviation will come only through the determined efforts of the United Nations.

1/ The most complete source of material on standard-wave Continental broadcasts are the Daily Digests of the British Broadcasting Company (1, see sources p.17). However, these were available only to November 28, 1941. Selected fragmentary materials (2,3) were available to March 1942. Indicative sources for British broadcasts (5,6) were available to February 1942. Material from the freedom stations (7,8) was essentially complete to March 1942. It is recognized that the sources from which this analysis has been made are not as complete as would be desirable. However, what is available allows us to delineate the general pattern of the broadcast atmosphere of the German public.

The material of this table analyzes the content of broadcasts purely from the point of view of the several propaganda aims. From our point of view, it is more significant to evaluate these programs as a part of the stimulus field of the German population.

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COMPARATIVE SUMMARY,
RADIO PROPAGANDA ATMOSPHERE IN GERMANY

GERMAN HOME BROADCASTS	BRITISH BROADCASTS	RUSSIAN BROADCASTS	OTHER BROADCASTS TO GERMANY
IMPORTANCE OF THE AGENCY			
Monopoly except for illegal listening. Only standard and long wave output permitted home audience. 40 such German language stations.	Most trusted and popular illegal broadcasts. Standard and shortwave. Listening supposedly widespread. Focused on working class, and women. Programs also addressed to youth. Special broadcasts to Austria	Apparently regular programs. BBC able to monitor shortwave only, standard wave presumably also used. Focused on class-conscious working class, also on women. Special broadcasts to Austria, Sudetenland.	These include: "The Chief", shortwave freedom station, important; "Radio of the European Revolution", shortwave freedom station; the Vatican, shortwave, probably important; United States, short and recently standard wave bands; Swiss on short and standard bands; Japanese infrequent, shortwave.
ACTION DESIRED			
Maintenance of domestic morale; especially faith in victory, and greater effort. Little positive "indoctrination" noted.	Conversion of audience to opposition to Nazis; conviction of certainty of Allied victory; sabotage of Nazi industry.	Conversion of audience to anti-Fascism, overthrow of government for peace; sabotage, desertion, pessimism over German hopes.	The Chief: manifestly to abet the army's war effort by removing Gestapo, SS; probably, demoralization of listeners. RER: Socialist opposition to the Nazis Vatican: putting religious values ahead of state. Swiss: neutral.
ATTITUDES SUGGESTED TOWARD THE WAR			
Russian front a successful defensive against strong Russian attacks; offensive to come with Spring.	Russia the important war theatre; upset Nazi time table; Hitler's fault.	Russian campaign brings terrific suffering, and losses to Germans who meet for first time a prepared enemy	The Chief: war being bungled through SS, Gestapo; bad news, as typhus epidemic, stressed; all army dismissals due to officers' opposition to party

ATTITUDES SUGGESTED TOWARD THE WAR (cont'd)

GERMAN HOME BROADCASTS	BRITISH BROADCASTS	RUSSIAN BROADCASTS	OTHER BROADCASTS TO GERMANY
Japanese victories jubilantly reported; show weakness of enemy	Japan's victories admitted, can only lengthen war.	China still holds out against the Japanese	RER: Pacific set-backs to Allied cause admitted; in part due to British colonial policy.
U-boat warfare successful, American production rendered useless.	U-boat menace controlled. British naval power dominant.		The Chief: U-boat crews poorly trained, not enough ships.
Libyan campaign played down until Rommel comeback.	Libyan campaign not a "second front" but an important diversion.		The Chief: Russian front sacrificed to send supplies to "lame lout Rommel".
War guilt much emphasized, rests solely with Allies.	Hitler responsible for the war, which is one of tyrannical aggression.	Hitler and his Fascists responsible for the brutal imperialist war booty.	The Vatican was noted in no statements to Germany on horrors of war or war guilt.
"Final Victory" may be difficult to obtain immediately, but 1942 will be another year of victories.	Length of war depends upon German people. Allies fight Nazis, not Germans.	Length of war depends upon German people, who must turn against Hitler to save themselves from vengeance of Europe.	Radio of the European Revolution: now is the time for the German people to end the war by turning against Hitler.
The Army is invincible, especially because of soldier morale, and especially if backed by the homeland.	Army and Party in conflict. Shortage of top officers and of soldiers since Russian campaign.	Invincibility a myth, met no prepared adversary before Russia. Soldiers desert.	The Chief: Army hamstrung by SS, Gestapo, politics.

GERMAN HOME BROADCASTS	BRITISH BROADCASTS	RUSSIAN BROADCASTS	OTHER BROADCASTS TO GERMANY
ATTITUDES SUGGESTED TOWARD THE NAZI GOVERNMENT			
Mention of "Der Fuehrer" overshadows all other references to government or party. He is practically omnipotent, the personal guarantor of Germany's success.	Hitler is the major target, blamed for Germany's troubles, portrayed as a bad guesser as well as immoral, is a part of "the enemy within".	Hitler the main target, personally blamed for attack on Russia, etc. Would be disowned by the majority of Germans.	The Chief at first supported Hitler, now omits mention. RER attacks Hitler. The Vatican occasionally attacks Nazi ideology and practices unmistakably but without naming them.
Ribbentrop, Rosenberg, Goebbels mentioned in connection with news features. Goering not prominent. Goebbels much quoted. SS and SA get some special mention.	Himmler, the SS and Gestapo are most frequently the "enemy within". The "Herrenklub" also attacked. Goebbels and Nazi propaganda attacked.	The term "Fascist" used in place of "Nazi". Goebbels a major target. Gestapo blamed for atrocities.	The Chief's main topics are the immorality of the SS and Gestapo. Propaganda ministry also attacked, but Himmler the only big leader specifically named. The whole party damned by implication. Minor officials "exposed".
Considerable attention to domestic morale for a period; denying British claims, proving high morale with winter clothing collection figures. More or less open admission that things are currently difficult for Germany. Assertion of economic strength and appeals to labor for greater effort.	Civilian morale, confidence in victory, lowered. Food shortages. Labor shortages, shown by use of foreign labor. Labor appealed to slow-down, resist.	Portrait of labor unrest, sabotage given. People exploited for the benefit of the industrialists.	The Chief presents a picture of poor conditions; shortages combined with graft; sabotage is rife, due to inefficiency of Gestapo. RER presents picture of bad conditions and unrest, and appeals to labor for resistance.

GERMAN HOME BROADCASTS	BRITISH BROADCASTS	RUSSIAN BROADCASTS	OTHER BROADCASTS TO GERMANY
ATTITUDES SUGGESTED TOWARD GERMAN PEOPLE AND TRADITIONS			
Present regime represents German cultural and scientific tradition; seeks to preserve Western European civilization, especially against Russian barbarism. Usual Christian and "enlightened" values of the Germans pandered to.	German people and traditions favored; old values lost under Nazis.	Old German morals and traditions flattered; these being lost; morality of robbers being instilled.	The Chief is strong for the older values, including trustworthiness in international dealings, and Christian morality (this along with much use of obscenity, racialism.)
ATTITUDES TOWARD THE "NEW EUROPE"			
"New Europe" a strong and willing coalition reforming Europe. Even Occupied countries portrayed as admiring partners, not as vassals.	"New Europe" a system of exploitation and recruitment. Harshness of Nazi occupation publicized. Resistance and hatred stressed.	All of Europe opposed to German oppression, will wreak vengeance on the government at least.	The Chief is antagonistic to Central European members on racial grounds. RER is strongly sympathetic with occupied countries, stresses resistance.
ATTITUDES SUGGESTED TOWARD THE MAJOR AXIS PARTNERS			
Japan wholeheartedly approved, including cultural aspects; the racial question not raised. Italy's strength more praised in home broadcasts than in outgoing propaganda. As a general theme, there is much stress on the fact that Germany has power-	No general attention paid. Japan's successes no real help to Germany. Italy a handicap.	Information lacking; Allies, especially China, supported in Pacific war. Capture of Italian prisoners given prominence.	The Chief derrogates the Italians as incompetent, a handicap.

ATTITUDES SUGGESTED TOWARD THE UNITED NATIONS

GERMAN HOME BROADCASTS	BRITISH BROADCASTS	RUSSIAN BROADCASTS	OTHER BROADCASTS TO GERMANY
Immoral provocaters and encirclers. Impotent militarily. Incompatible, exploit each other; U. S. usually the arch villain	A strong determined defensive coalition which will not compromise with totalitarianism.	Strength and unity with Russia stressed.	RER: completely sympathetic with Allied war effort, critical of British colonial policy. Communists supported, with reservations.
Britain is decaying, impotent, being absorbed by the U.S. and Bolshevized by Russia. Oppressor of India. Churchill still attacked, but Cripps new main target.	Britain defending herself against Nazi domination. People respond sturdily to defeats. Strength emphasized where possible.	British morale praised, military defeats explained away.	The Chief occasionally uses derrogatory language in speaking of England.
Russia is Bolshevik, but more important, barbaric. A constant threat to civilized Europe.	Russian military strength and determination praised, and in addition her culture and civilization.	A country of high morale, good living conditions, generous spirit. Little mention of economic system.	The Vatican is consistently anti-Communist. The Chief uses the terms Bolshevist and communist as epithets, usually against Nazi party members.
U.S. productive capacity neutralized by U-boats. Weak, not unified. Arch-imperialist Roosevelt and "his Jewish masters" main target.	U.S. great economic strength stressed though some internal conflicts reported.	U.S. the "Arsenal of Freedom," supports Russia's war effort.	The RER makes no comment on American institutions, but emphasizes her importance in the outcome of the war.

GERMAN HOME BROADCASTS	BRITISH BROADCASTS	RUSSIAN BROADCASTS	OTHER BROADCASTS TO GERMANY
IDEOLOGY FAVORED			
Ideological expressions mostly negative: Anti-democracy, plutocracy, capitalism, bolshevism, communism, collectivism, Judaism. Some positive ideological sentiments, of political and economic reform, with "Fortress of Europe", and "New Europe" themes.	Atlantic Charter ideals, much emphasis on freedom. Strongly anti-Fascist. Special working class appeal, opposition to the upper classes and Herrenklub. Not specific on topic of economic reform.	Noticeable absence of economic reform ideology. "Hitler's Fascism" attacked. A "family of nations" to follow this war. Social justice, workers' rights, peace, and freedom (if not democracy) (are advocated.	The Chief lacks any consistent ideology except in pseudo German patriotism. The Radio of the European Revolution follows a consistent Socialist proletarian revolutionary line. The Vatican attacks all current political ideologies, especially the "New Paganism" which puts the state before Christ and which lays claim to a new gospel.

III. BROADCASTS AS A STIMULUS FIELD

The individual German citizen listening to his radio most probably has it tuned to one of the permitted official stations. At the same time his neighbors and friends are listening to other legal stations. But in any community there will inevitably be a small number sufficiently curious and sufficiently daring to listen to illegal stations. What is heard over such stations is apparently spread to a considerable extent by word of mouth. Thus, if one considers the German population in the aggregate, all types of broadcasts have some opportunity of being heard. Just what the effect on the listener of the many possible sources of information is, we have no means of definitely knowing. Of one thing we can be sure -- there are persons who have greater faith in the accuracy of British broadcasts than they have in their own, and who are willing to jeopardize their personal safety to spread information from the foreign source. Thus, it seems reasonable to conclude that in any German community the population will be, in some measure, subjected to contradictory informational stimulation.

Axis victory. The German official broadcasts, on the one hand, set forth Germany's goal as a victory which will make possible a new Europe, reformed along ideal economic and political lines, and which will offer Germany freedom, her deserved position of leadership and her just share of the natural resources of the world. Evidently such a goal is much to be desired, but from illegal listening the German citizen learns that the enemy claims a German victory will mean an enslaved Europe,

ruled by the Nazis for their own anti-social purposes. The victory referred to is declared by German stations to be certain, by foreign stations to be in doubt. All stations assure the listener that victory is far in the future. In this connection the German stations have had to change their claims, common only a year ago, that a Nazi victory was in sight. Foreign broadcasts suggest the possibility of shortening the war if the German people once recognize that they are dupes of Nazi overlords, and then insist that hostilities be stopped.

Allied victory. Obviously, foreign stations do not recognize the possibility of a German victory; rather they emphasize the advantages to be gained by the German population from a United Nations victory. Only in this way can Germany and the world be saved from Nazi domination. The Moscow radio in particular comes close to threatening that unless the German people act against their leader, they will have to be dealt with even as their leaders most certainly will be. The German official radio tacitly admits the possibility of an Allied victory by its picturing of the evil of such an event: Germany will lose every thing she has worked and hoped for; failure will mean economic exploitation by Jewish and Anglo-Saxon capitalists; failure means subjugation by barbaric and communist Russian hordes.

German reversals. The German official radio has in the past few months recognized certain reversals and has endeavored to explain them. For example, it is admitted that conditions at home are now much worse than they were during the first years

of the war, but that even greater sacrifices will have to be made if German victory is to be achieved. Again, the failures on the Russian front are said to be due to unusual weather conditions and this gives opportunity to call attention to the high endurance of the German soldier. At the same time that the German radio is accounting for the reversals in Russia, the foreign broadcasts are describing the Russian campaign as a failure. This failure is said to be a result of Hitler's bad judgment, and that it is the beginning of Germany's downfall.

It is hardly necessary to expand at greater length on all of the various topics treated in the radio broadcasts. In every instance where Germany paints a glowing, favorable picture or, at worst, offers justification for certain events, the anti-Nazi radios picture the German situation in blackest terms. In considering these contrasts, it must be clearly understood that the German citizen does not have the objective evidence on both sides before him for careful weighing. The meaning of the contrasting stimulations in terms of the behavior of the German people is not simply confusion in thinking. Insofar as broadcast propaganda is effective at all, it is quite evident that the official broadcasts have a prepotency over all others. At best, the material from illegal stations can only raise doubts in the minds of most of the population about the accuracy of official broadcasts and about the favorable conditions they describe. Such doubts may be the catalyst to facilitate action favorable to the Allied cause when the impact of military and economic events indicate reversals to Germany.

IV. GERMAN MORALE INFERRED FROM HOME BROADCASTS.

A major purpose of Nazi home propaganda is the maintenance of effective attitudes. It is therefore to be expected that any signs of anti-regime attitudes or actions would be recognized by the radio propagandists who are, no doubt, well informed on such conditions in the civilian population. Such recognition in the content of home broadcasts is demonstrated in two ways. On the one hand, it is shown by an increasing number of direct admissions of civilian complaint. These admissions have been more frequent in broadcasts to antagonistic audiences, such as the French and Czechs, but they have been appearing increasingly, especially in statements by Goebbels, in the home broadcasts. On the other hand, it appears in the extreme emphasis on certain points and exaggerated reassurances which may be interpreted as attempts to gloss over or compensate for undesirable conditions. A word of warning is necessary here: One cannot infer too much about civil conditions because of the known Nazi technique of broadcasting certain material at home in order to deceive the enemy.

Direct admissions. In studying the material available on German home broadcasts we find direct admissions of complaints about the difficult times, about the family's worries over soldiers at the front, about feeling of war weariness, about overwork and lack of sleep. It is admitted there is fear of bombing. Evidence from other sources, e.g., intercepted letters, interviews and news reports, agree that these complaints do occur. Thus we may cautiously accept the official broadcast admissions at

at their face value.

Compensatory themes. The second, indirect, clues are more frequent but more difficult to evaluate. Many of the themes have been present in German propaganda for a long time. Proper analysis would require detailed quantitative study beyond anything possible with the material we have available. Reasonable interpretation can point to what appears to be undue insistence on the army's invincibility, on Hitler's omnipotence, on elaborate justifications for the war, on reassurances that German civilian and army morale are superior. Contrariwise, there is projected on the enemy in an over-compensating way the war guilt, inadequate preparation, nd poor morale. One gets the feeling in these indirect themes that the propagandist is making extreme efforts to make light of harships which he knows exist and to build encouragement by insisting on the inadequacies of the enemy.

The weak points in civilian life appearing in the analysis of available material include doubts of victory, war weariness and desire for peace, objections to bad living conditions, the family's concern over men at the front, worry over American entry into the war, fear of bombing, resignation, and concern over war guilt. All these are obviously factors which, if they were widespread among the civilian population, would reduce below the danger point the morale necessary to carry on the war effort. From sources other than broadcasts there are suggestions that it is in just these respects that the morale of a certain number of people is low. However, there are no in-

dications from broadcast material, nor for that matter from any other source, that such negative attitudes are sufficiently widespread to interfere seriously with the Nazi program. It may well be that the propagandists are dealing immediately with even minor indications of negative attitudes in order to forestall their spread and possible drastic results.

SOURCES

(1) "Daily Digest of Foreign Broadcasts", BBC Monitoring Service, (To November 28, 1941).

(2) "Weekly Analysis of Foreign Broadcasts", BBC Research Unit (Overseas), (Issues of December 16, 1941 and February 3, 1942).

(3) "Medium Wave Monitoring Report", COI, cabled from British sources (daily, to March 4, 1941).

(4) "German Propaganda and the German", P.I.D. (E.H. Series Propaganda Research Section (British) Weekly. (Issue of November 27, 1941).

(5) "Weekly Directive for BBC German Services", Political Warfare Executive (To November 21, 1941).

(6) "Supplementary "Guidance" to the BBC German Services (To February 17, 1942).

(7) "Weekly Analysis of Official Foreign Broadcasts", FCC Foreign Broadcast Monitoring Service, (To March 7, 1942).

(8) Transcripts of broadcasts, FCC Foreign Broadcast Monitoring Service, (To March 5, 1942).